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OBSERVATIONS

ON

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

BY THE REV. J. H. HARRIS, D. D.

PRINCIPAL, OF U. C. COLLEGE.

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UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

IT is not without hesitation that I venture to offer the following remarks on the subject of Upper Canada College ; but as the head of a public Institution to which attention has of late been in a peculiar manner drawn, it will not, I trust, be deemed extraordinary that I should feel some anxiety for its prospects and reputation, and a desire that, at least, it should not suffer from want of being properly understood.

An opportunity, which I have for some time desired, is also thus afforded me, of correcting an erroneous impression which I know to be extensively prevalent as to the *kind of education** which is to be obtained at the College. The impression to which I allude is, that an exclusive, or almost exclusive, attention, is paid to the study of the Classics—how far the fact is otherwise, the statement which will be found below, and to which I invite particular attention, will sufficiently demonstrate.

I cannot but regret the desire which has been manifested of investing this subject with a political character ; of making it a party question, instead of considering it on its own intrinsic

* Since writing the above, I find impressions of this nature are so much on the increase, that it would be wrong to give an apparent countenance to them by longer silence. For however desirable it may be that a place of public education should only vindicate itself by persevering in the faithful and unobtrusive discharge of its trust, there is a point beyond which to suffer the unchecked spread of false impressions, whether they arise from insufficient inquiry, or from mis-representation, would be culpably to acquiesce in the injustice done to the Institution. I have not, however, attempted to correct false impressions by any particular notice of vague and unfounded reports, but have preferred giving an authentic detail of the course *actually* pursued at the College, (as in the latter part of these 'Observations,') and leaving public candour to compare mere assertions with that statement ; only requesting that those who interest themselves on the subject, will hesitate to believe any thing they may hear which is not reconcilable with the conscientious desire and endeavour, on the part of the College, to carry into full effect every part of the system here described.

merits. The College is an Institution for the instruction of *whatever* youth may choose to resort to it, in literature, science, and morality—not in politics, of any shade or degree. I appeal to the knowledge of those who have been at the pains to inform themselves, whether such be not the case; and to the candour of those who have not made enquiry, to believe my assertion, that politics form no part of the instruction given to pupils of Upper Canada College.

As the representation, introduced into the Seventh Grievance Report of the House of Assembly, that "Upper Canada College is upheld at great public expense, with high salaries to its principal masters, but that the Province generally derives very little advantage from it, and that it might be dispensed with," has received the consideration of the Colonial Minister: I propose, with all due respect, to make this representation the subject of the following remarks—availing myself of the opportunity to add any other considerations which may appear to bear on the general question.

I would first, however, beg permission to notice the assertion made in the Address of the House of Assembly to His Excellency Sir John Colborne, at the opening of the late Session, "that only the sons of the wealthiest inhabitants receive their education at the College."

It is true I have not any more authentic knowledge of the relative wealth, than I have of the religious or political creeds, of the parents of the majority of the pupils of Upper Canada College; but I believe that a reference to the list of boys now at the Institution, as well as to the names of all those who have been entered since its commencement, would satisfy any one acquainted with the circumstances of the inhabitants of the Province, that a large proportion of the pupils would *not* come under the description of "sons of the wealthiest inhabitants." And as further evidence to the same purport, I refer to the names of some former pupils of the College, appended to an Address presented by them to His Excellency Sir John Colborne, on the occasion of his departure.

Had the charges for education at the College been fixed at so high a rate, as to exclude the children of those in moderate circumstances, exception might well have been taken at the advantage given to the wealthy ; but the terms being such as to render the College accessible to almost every condition, it is surely no just ground of complaint that the children of the rich are allowed to participate in a benefit which is open to all.

And, viewing the subject in another light, let it be remembered how many have become, and are daily becoming, wealthy by their own industry and exertions ; and should such parents, after being allowed the advantages of a sound education for their children, at a public Seminary, whilst they were in narrower circumstances, be denied those advantages when their successful application has raised them to independence?—Any one considering the condition of this young and rising country, and how rapidly honourable exertion may advance a man from slender means to affluence, must feel the injustice of attaching to his success the penalty of being disqualified for a participation in public advantages such as these.

As the objection which I have here considered, stands in a great measure detached from any others, and appeared capable of so simple a refutation, I have thought it desirable to dispose of it, *in limine*, by showing, in the first place, that it is founded in error ; and, in the second place, that had the fact been as represented, it would have afforded no valid argument against the beneficial effects of the College as a public Institution, from which it could never be desirable to exclude the children of the rich because its advantages are placed within the reach of all classes of the community.

It is represented that Upper Canada College is upheld at great public expense, with high salaries to its principal masters. With regard to the amount of the respective salaries of the Principal and Masters, as it is not my intention to involve personal considerations on this occasion, I merely observe, that the

salaries are not so high as, on the average, they are in similar Institutions in England; and it could not reasonably be expected that Masters, possessing the requisite qualifications, would be induced to come out to this country for a remuneration much inferior to that which is attached to similar situations in the midst of their connexions at home; but, on the contrary, it might fairly be argued that the remuneration should be higher here than for like duties in England, in order to compensate for the sacrifice of interests and prospects which is necessarily involved in the acceptance of a distant appointment.

As to the 'public expense' at which the College is upheld, I would submit that, allowing it to be, in itself, apparently great, two considerations arise with respect to the benefits purchased at this expense, which arise with respect to any purchasable commodity—first, can the commodity be procured in every respect of equal goodness at a less price?—and secondly, if it be necessarily an expensive article, is it worth the price to the purchaser?

Now as to the first question, it is a certain fact, that a liberal and comprehensive education cannot be provided but at a considerable expense, to be borne *somewhere*. The people in general, in a new country, cannot bear it from their private means, and it must therefore, if provided for at all, be borne by the public resources. Even in the old countries of Europe, and particularly in England, all the leading Seminaries are supported by endowments; and limited indeed, in comparison with what they actually are, would be the means of Education in Great Britain, had not Royal, and individual munificence, founded Schools and Colleges for the promotion of learning, and made such permanent provision for the maintenance of Tutors and Masters, as leaves little comparative expense to be defrayed by many parents, whose sons must otherwise have wanted that which has proved to them more valuable than the richest inheritance.

To this patriotic and generous regard of our forefathers for the interests of learning, it is to be ascribed that, in England, so many men of humble origin have been enabled to raise themselves to proud distinction as statesmen, and scholars, and philosophers. Looking particularly at the profession of the Law, how many of our most considerable families, and of our nobility, are indebted, for their present position in society, to the facilities which happily existed for the education of that ancestor whose superior talents first raised himself and his name from humble obscurity?

This allusion reminds me of the recommendation which was made at a popular meeting in this place, some few years since, that the Home Government should send out Judges to Canada from the English bar, till the improved state of education in the Province should render such a course unnecessary. Now in one point of view, I should certainly not have adverted to this circumstance as making for my present argument; for to nothing could a stronger appeal be made in proof of the sufficiency of the existing means of education, than to the actual discharge of the judicial functions in Upper Canada: but I may fairly be allowed to infer, from the fact of such an opinion having been expressed, that it was not generally considered that the then available means of education were adequate to the requirements of the Colony; and that therefore an Institution which is every year sending out youths, not inferior in classical knowledge to the greater part of those who leave our public Schools in England for the Universities, and with the addition of *many* useful attainments which the latter do not generally possess, is *not* conferring unimportant advantages on the Province at large, and could *not* be dispensed with, but at the certainty of still keeping the standard of education below that point which is correspondent with the general advancement and exigencies of the community.

But to return from this longer digression than I had intended. If in so old, and populous, and wealthy a country as England,

liberal education has been maintained at an expense so much greater than is covered by the mere payment made by individual parents, for the instruction of their children, it is not to be expected that the case should be otherwise here; but rather that the expense of a higher order of education should, for some time to come, appear more disproportionate to the extent of good effected, than where society has been increasing, and advancing for ages. This is a consequence necessarily resulting from the nature of the case; and for the same reasons, the disproportion between the expense and the amount of advantage diffused through the Province, would be still more apparent with regard to a University, the expenditure on which must be manifold greater than that on an introductory Seminary, whilst the number of individuals who would probably avail themselves of the advantages of the former, could not, for many years, be at all equal to the number of pupils receiving their education at the latter. And yet I never heard any objection of this nature to the University, as though its endowment were too great, or as though the Province in general were likely to derive very little advantage from it; for, besides the fact, that the expense of education beyond a certain grade, increases in a rapid ratio as the standard rises, it must be obvious with respect to the higher pursuits of learning and science, that the taste and demand for them, in a new community, must not only be encouraged, but, in a great measure, *created*; and this is to be done, not by a tardy supply of facilities and assistance, only afforded when the necessity can no longer be denied, but by providing opportunities *in advance*, which may elicit latent genius, and lead the way to the loftier paths of knowledge. To delay, therefore, the commencement of the University till a much larger number of students actually presented themselves to enter its walls, would be to postpone the cultivation of a field till a few spontaneous ears had multiplied themselves to a full crop; forgetting the danger that the seeds thus left to themselves may perish, whereas if carefully collected

and cultivated, they would probably in a few seasons produce an abundant increase.

The above desultory remarks may perhaps suffice to shew that education of a superior kind is, to a certain extent, necessarily an expensive commodity. I proceed to the question, whether it is worth the cost to the purchaser, i. e. to the Province; or, in other words, to reply to the opinions that "the Province generally derives very little advantage from the College, and that it might be dispensed with."

I infer from the expression "the Province *generally*," that it is implied that the advantages of the College are chiefly confined to the immediate vicinity of Toronto; and it is certainly the case that the greater part of the pupils has always been from this city and neighbourhood. The number of boys from the country, (and some from very *distant* parts) has generally been rather more than a third of the entire number; and when it is considered how many circumstances, besides the expense, may concur to make it inconvenient to parents to send their sons far from home, this is perhaps nearly as large a proportion as could be expected. But the benefits to the Province at large are not to be solely estimated by the comparative number of pupils who are sent to the College from districts more or less remote from its vicinity. The beneficial effects of talents which are drawn forth, and cultivated, by a systematic course of education, are not confined to the locality, either of the school, or of the home, of the talented individual; the talents thus matured, are the property and advantage, no less than the ornament, of the country at large. No one thinks of enquiring whether a Bacon, or a Newton, a Johnson or an Addison, received his education in his native town, or at a distant school; the whole nation enjoys the fruits of their talents, and glories in their fame, wherever they were educated. It may indeed be a source of honest pride to particular schools to have educated such luminaries, as it may be to their native

places, to have produced them, but the distinction thus enjoyed by the one, or the other, does not in the least diminish the *public* advantage, and the *public* honour derived from their abilities.

But to meet more directly the question of advantages derived by the Province generally from the institution of Upper Canada College: we must remember that it is too soon to judge of the fruit of a tree before the period of its maturity has arrived; and that it is equally unreasonable to expect that a place of education for youth should have produced any demonstrable *present* influence on the community, in the course of six years from its foundation. Even supposing pupils who left the College after but three years attendance from its commencement, to be fair specimens of a system which requires from six to eight years for its completion, there has yet been no sufficient time for those young men to come forward, and shew the effects of their education in qualifying them for their several pursuits: and of course, those who have left the College at later periods, and who are fairer representatives of its system, in proportion as they continued longer under its training, are still further from the time when their qualifications will be tested in the business of life.

Although, however, the College course of education can only be adequately judged of from those pupils who have thoroughly completed it, I would with confidence refer to from twenty to thirty young men who have left the College, at different intervals, within the last three years, as those whose education will give them decided advantages in their future professional pursuits; and many of whom, were the scene of their youthful studies now to cease to exist, so that no succession of competitors, similarly trained, could follow them into the field, would always maintain an elevated, and unquestioned superiority.

Besides the pupils I have thus more particularly alluded to, there are also to be taken into account the numbers who have left the College at various stages of advancement, short of complet-

ing the course; and who may be supposed to have profited by their attendance in corresponding degrees.

Is then the Province in general really deriving no advantage from an Institution, which, at this early period of its existence, has sent forth so many young men thus qualified, who cannot fail to carry with them, the influence of mental culture and refinement, into the various parts of the Province, through which they will in a few years be dispersed. As the Institution continues its operations, and with those improvements which lengthened experience may be supposed constantly to suggest, it must send forth increasing numbers of pupils, whose qualifications will be more and more various and complete. Nor can there be a doubt that these numbers would be yet further increased, and the consequent benefits be enhanced and perpetuated, if, on leaving the College, young men had the opportunity of prosecuting their studies, and of earning distinction by their attainments, at a Provincial University.

Instead, therefore, of admitting the position that the College might be dispensed with, I would, with all deference, maintain that it, or some similar Institution, is indispensable, if it be desirable that Upper Canada, advancing as it is in every other respect which gives importance, and superiority to a people, should not remain stationary as to literary, and intellectual improvement.

It is, of course, impossible that an Institution, furnished with the means of supplying so solid and complete an education as is contemplated in the above remarks, and as can alone effect any essential general improvement, should be established in every District—the expense being far too great, and the demand too limited, for such a provision. The obvious alternative is the establishment of one such Institution, for the benefit, not of the particular District in which it may be placed, (and it must be placed in some District,) but of the whole Province. Such, in fact, were the considerations which led to the foundation of Upper Canada College. It was observed that the general

standard of education to be obtained at the District Schools did not, and from their nature and circumstances, could not, afford an adequate preparation for the higher departments of study which are appropriate to a University. Hence appeared the necessity for a Seminary which, *as a Provincial Institution*, should hold an intermediate position, and fill up the existing interval, between the District Schools generally, and the University.)

If it be desired that the University should yield all the advantages to the Province, which such an Institution is calculated to confer, it is absolutely necessary that the youth who resort to that ultimate seat of learning, should be duly qualified, by their previous education, to improve the opportunities to be there afforded them. For though it is far from an unimportant *incidental* advantage of a University, that it will afford to young men, who have already entered upon the active engagements of life, opportunities of attending lectures on various branches of literature and science; this is not the primary object of such an Institution: ~~that object~~ is rather, by maturing and perfecting the attainments of young men, to give them higher qualifications and improved tastes, *previously* to their entering the world; and also to encourage a more careful attention to the earlier stages of education, by offering a field in which superior talents, and attainments may gain public distinction and record. But neither of these essential objects, ~~can~~ be fully realized by youths who have no choice, but to proceed to the University, with such preparation as was attainable previous to the institution of Upper Canada College. The interval between the District Schools and the University, as I have already intimated, was too great to be passed over at single step.

The correctness of this opinion has been practically illustrated in New Brunswick. In that Province a University was put into operation about five years ago, without, at the same time, making any such addition to, or alteration in, the *previously* existing means of education, as should afford the requisite preparation for those intending to avail themselves of the new

Institution: the consequence was, that youths were sent there at an age, and with acquirements, alike unsuited to the studies and regulations of the the place; and it was found that the students were too young to be left to their own guidance and controul, and yet, as members of a University, they could not be subjected to that discipline, and restraint, which their years required. From this instance, and from the nature of the case, it appears therefore highly probable, that had circumstances allowed of the University going into operation some years since, the establishment of an Institution, similar to the College, would in a short time have followed, as a necessary auxiliary.

In order that the College may duly fulfil this object of supplying a connecting link between the District Schools, throughout the Province, and the University, it is of course essential that there should be such an uniformity of system pursued at those Schools and the College, as would make the former the proper preparatives for the latter; so that on the removal of a pupil from one place of education to the other, he might not find himself thrown back, and discouraged, by the difference of method, and the strangeness of every thing about him, but might feel that he was only transferred to a more advanced position in the same system. On the effects, however, which the want of such a general uniformity in the public schools of the Province has had on the extended utility of the College, I purpose making a few remarks in a subsequent page.

Whilst, however, maintaining the necessity for a Seminary capable of imparting a thorough liberal education, I am not insensible to those particular circumstances of the Province, which render it desirable, that the course of instruction to be adopted at such a Seminary, should, as far as is compatible with the attainment of its primary object, be so arranged as to afford to pupils, not finally destined for the University, or for learned professions, the means of acquiring, by proceeding through a certain portion of the system, such an education as would be suitable for every member of respectable society: and I feel that

an arrangement of this kind, to the fullest *practicable* extent, is the more proper, because, though the ~~same~~ degree of proficiency, in some branches of study, may not be requisite for the future merchant or agriculturalist, as for the member of a liberal profession, there are no acquirements of general information useful to the former, which are not also advantageous to the latter.

With reference to such considerations as these, the course of education at the College was, from its establishment, organized : less decidedly so indeed at first, than subsequently ; for continued modifications have from time to time been *since* suggested, and introduced—all tending to increase the proportion of miscellaneous studies, and to retrench the time devoted to the Classics, till, at present, this latter branch occupies *less than half* of the time spent at the College by pupils of any standing ; as will be perceived from the subjoined outline.

Before, however, requesting attention to this detail, I would again repeat, what I intimated at the beginning, that I am desirous of taking this opportunity to correct those false impressions respecting the *character* of the education to be obtained at the College, which I believe to be prevalent,

I have reason to know that within fifty miles of Toronto, the idea that an almost exclusive attention was paid to the study of the Classics, has been so generally entertained, as to deter many parents from sending their sons to the Institution. A gentleman from the neighbourhood to which I allude, (and who, I trust, will pardon the allusion,) after being present during the Examination last Christmas, came to me, at the conclusion, to express his surprise and gratification, at finding the system so widely different from what he had been led to expect. He had been so impressed with the belief, generally entertained in his neighbourhood, that nothing but Latin and Greek was taught at the College, as to have felt much doubt whether he should continue to send his own son, who had been a College Boarder for three quarters of a year ; but having, fortunately, thus had the opportunity of seeing and judging for himself, he returned home sat-

ified in his own mind, and with the determination of endeavouring to disabuse the minds of his neighbours, on the subject. If misconceptions of this kind exist within so short a distance of the Institution, it can scarcely be supposed that they are less prevalent farther off. How they should continue in face of the evidence to the contrary which might be afforded, if sought, by those pupils who come from the several neighbourhoods, it is difficult to account for, except from the fact, that where an opinion has once been taken up, with, perhaps, some degree of foundation in the first instance, an indisposition to make enquiry, and to part with received impressions, often keeps persons in the persuasion that a state of things which existed once, must still continue, although, in fact, material changes have since taken place.

That there is such a tendency, through a sort of mental *vis inertiae*, to proceed in the direction of first impressions, and a disinclination to admit a change of opinion, the history of the College affords another exemplification, which I will take leave to mention.

When the College Boarding House was first added to the Establishment, several irregularities occurred, through the neglect of the Superintendent, before they were made known to the College authorities; immediately on their being discovered, an entire change in the superintendence took place: and since that time, I may safely affirm, that in every respect, whether as regards the domestic comfort, or the moral and scholastic superintendence of the Boarders, the College Boarding House is surpassed by few similar establishments on either side the Atlantic. Such, I have reason to know, is the character it generally enjoys through the Province; and yet I am at the same time aware, that in one particular neighbourhood, and that too, from which several boys are sent to the College, whose friends are constant in their enquiries respecting them, there are many persons who still persist in speaking of the Boarding House as allowing great laxity in the conduct of its inmates.

I have been the rather inclined to notice this illustration of the difficulty with which prejudices, once entertained, are dismissed, in the hope that persons who do such injustice to the present conduct of this branch of the College, may be induced to make those enquiries which cannot fail to result in altered impressions.

I now proceed to give an outline of the studies at present pursued at Upper Canada College; not without the hope that a consideration of it will procure a juster appreciation of the Institution, than prejudice, or misapprehension, has in many instances accorded.

COURSE OF EDUCATION.

THE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, as its name imports, is merely for the preparation of those pupils who are not qualified to join the lowest College Form. One portion of the day is occupied in learning the Latin Accidence; the second, in English Reading and Spelling; and the third in Writing and Arithmetic. There is no fixed period for pupils remaining in this School; they are removed into the junior College Form, as soon as they are sufficiently prepared.

1st COLLEGE FORM.—Latin Grammar, and Exercises; Corderius; English Reading and Spelling; Elementary Geography, *viva voce*; Writing and Arithmetic.

2nd FORM.—Latin Grammar; *Exempla Minora*; *Lectiones Selectæ*; English Reading and Dictation; Geography; outlines of English History; Writing and Arithmetic; French.

3rd FORM.—Latin Grammar; *Exempla Minora*; Phædrus, Cornelius Nepos; Rudiments of Greek, (one hour a-week); English Reading and Dictation; English History; Geography; Writing; Arithmetic; French; Geometrical Drawing, as preparatory to Surveying.

4th FORM.—Latin Grammar; Clarke's Exercises; Cæsar; Ovid; Greek Grammar; Greek Exercises; Greek Delectus; English or Roman History; English Exercises; Writing; Arithmetic; French; Geometrical Drawing; Mathematics, (by pupils sufficiently advanced.)

5th FORM.—Latin Grammar; Ellis's Exercises; Sallust; Ovid; Greek Grammar; Greek Exercises; Greek Testament; *Analecta Græca Minora*; English Composition; Roman, or Grecian History; Writing; Arithmetic; French; Geometrical Drawing; Mathematics.

6th FORM.—Latin Grammar; Latin Exercises; Virgil; Cicero's Orations; Latin and English Composition; Greek Grammar; Greek Exercises; Greek Testament; Homer; General History; Writing; Arithmetic; French; Geometrical Drawing; Mathematics.

7th FORM.—Valpy's *Elegantiae Latinæ*; Cicero; Livy; Horace; Latin and English Composition; Greek Grammar; Greek Exercises; Greek Testament; Greek Poet; Greek Prose; Arithmetic; French; Geometrical Drawing; History and Geography; Mathematics; Natural Philosophy.

PARTIAL CLASS.—English Composition; History; Geography; Writing; Arithmetic; Mathematics; French; Geometrical Drawing; Book-keeping.

Note.—The Partial Class was instituted to meet the views of those pupils whose friends are not desirous that they should complete a Classical education. Such are allowed to diverge from the general course, and to enter the Partial Class after being at College *two years*, or after having passed through the *third Form*.—Pupils also who at the time of their admission are too old to render it advisable for them to *begin the study of Latin*, are allowed to enter the Partial Class.

Note, also.—Throughout the whole College, every Form, (with the exception only of those boys whose friends object to that particular lesson) has a Scriptura lesson on Monday and Friday, consisting of recitation and reading, on the former day, and of reading, on the latter: both lessons being accompanied with such explanations by the Masters as are calculated to illustrate the subject, without interfering with any peculiar religious tenets.

A BOOK KEEPING CLASS—Composed of sufficiently qualified pupils of various standings in the College, attends the Writing Master three times a week.

In addition to the above, which compose the routine studies of the College, a Drawing Master attends from 12 to 2 on Wednesdays and Saturdays, (which are half holidays) to give lessons to those pupils who wish to learn landscape and figure Drawing. For this, as being an extra branch, there is an additional charge.

THE COLLEGE BOARDING HOUSE.

This establishment was added to the Institution, at a later period, with the design of rendering the advantages of the College accessible to many boys living at a distance, whose parents, though desirous of sending their sons, could not conveniently bear the expense of placing them as Boarders with the Masters. Here pupils receive their board and education for the sum of £30, Currency, per annum. A Matron is engaged to take charge of the domestic affairs of the establishment, and the junior Master resides in the House for the purpose of superintending the conduct of the Boarders.

It will at once be seen that the education above described is very far from being merely Classical: that it comprises, in fact, besides the Classics, progressive instruction in—*Writing; Arithmetic; Book-keeping; Geography; History; English Composition; French; Mathematics; the Principles of Land Surveying; and Elements of Natural Philosophy.*

To this course, *as a whole*, I would confidently appeal, and ask whether the youth who has been done justice to by himself and his teachers, in going through it, can be said *not* to have

[The terms of Tuition for Day Scholars are £2 per quarter, for Pupils in the College; and £1 5s. per quarter for those in the Preparatory School; with an additional 5s. per quarter, in each case, for the contingent expenses of pens and ink, fuel, &c.]

received a *useful* education ; something more than a barren acquaintance with a few Latin and Greek books. But it is *as a whole* that it can alone be fairly and adequately judged of. For though in accordance with the principles already adverted to, it will be observed that a pupil who has gone regularly through the three lower Forms, will have acquired the substantial of a plain and practical education ; to which he will make further additions as he ascends higher in the system—(and in still greater proportion if he should be removed from the third, or any higher Form, into the Partial Class, where Classical studies are altogether omitted)—though, there are the means of a boy's acquiring the fundamentals of an English education, by attending on but a small portion of the system ; yet it is obvious that no fair estimate of any systematic course of education, in its completeness, can be formed from these detached fragments of it.

In framing a system of education for a public Seminary, reference must, of course, be had to the case of pupils who are supposed to begin at the foundation, and pass regularly through the several stages, till they arrive at its completion. Accordingly, a certain range of subjects being proposed as those which are to be embraced in the entire course, these are adjusted and disposed of in such order and combination as appear best calculated to lead the pupil through successive degrees of advancement till he is conducted to the completion. If, therefore, a boy knowing little or nothing is brought to such a Seminary, and withdrawn after a time only sufficient to carry him through a sixth of the course, is it reasonable to charge the Seminary with not teaching the other five-sixths ?

It is manifest that every thing cannot be learned *at once*, nor any single subject, without the consumption of a certain portion of time ; the acquisition, therefore, of several branches of knowledge must necessarily occupy a proportionably lengthened period, and it is as unjust as it is unreasonable, to condemn any

scheme of education as defective on a view of the attainments of a pupil who has passed through but a small part of it, particularly if that part be at the commencement, and, therefore, chiefly elementary. If the pupil began at the beginning, all that can be required is, that he should be thoroughly instructed as far as he has advanced, and that his advancement should be proportionate to the time he has been taught: if he was removed from another School, and placed at some intermediate position of the College, the latter cannot be responsible for the degree of accuracy and soundness with which the ground-work of his previous education may have been laid; and should this have been imperfect, the difficulty of repairing the defect, by any subsequent pains, is greater than can be imagined without experience.

I believe every body assents to the practical good sense of the Dutch Minister of State, who said he got through so many things, by doing only *one at a time*: and yet I have often had occasion to think that many parents do not consider this maxim applicable to the business of education; for I am sensible that an adherence to the principle of not attempting to teach a greater variety of subjects at one time, than could be taught thoroughly, nor more advanced subjects than were suitable to the existing attainments of the pupil, has injured the College in the estimation of not a few, who were impatient to see a more rapid and ostensible progress, than the age or attainments of their children rendered practicable.

This remark applies more particularly to some who, being themselves unacquainted with the Classical languages, are incapable of estimating the progress which their children really do make in the rudiments of Latin, and are also not aware of the time which is unavoidably expended, at first, in acquiring these elements, but with which a thorough familiarity is indispensable to the attainment of any proficiency in the Classics which shall be of future avail; for to nothing, perhaps, is the

maxim that "if it be worth while to do a thing at all, it is worth while to do it *well*," more applicable than to elementary Classical studies, which, if they be superficially taught, all future labour is little better than thrown away.

And whatever diversity of opinion may exist as to the value of Classical knowledge and taste, when obtained, there can be none as to the useless waste of time caused by the process, which, after three or four years of Classical instruction, leaves a boy so little acquainted with grammatical principles, that he cannot, without assistance, account for the construction of a simple sentence, nor understand an ordinary passage, in a Latin author. Yet this *must* be the case, if, for the sake of a seemingly rapid proficiency, the necessary time and pains be not taken for securing the ground-work. A child, or a native of the woods, on seeing the foundations of a house sunk in the earth, might think it very unnecessary to lay so much material, with such great nicety, where it would never after afterwards be seen; but little architectural experience is requisite to teach us what would be the consequence of beginning to build on the *surface* of the ground.

Moreover, though the progress of the pupil to an unpractised observer, may for a time be scarcely perceptible, the mind is, nevertheless, acquiring materials and strength for future efforts and success, as certainly as the absorption of sap is daily adding to the vigour and growth of the young tree, though the increase in its size may not be apparent to the eye for months or years. And I might add, that the sounder and more serviceable the tree in its maturity, the slower and more gradual is its early growth.

It will not be supposed that I am advocating an exclusively Classical education if I here venture to express a conviction, (the result of personal observation,) that those are much mistaken who consider that the mind of a boy, whilst occupied with Latin Grammar, *and its application*, is stagnant, and its powers

unexercised ; the fault must be very much in the teacher if the pupil's judgment and reflection be not constantly called into action, at a very early stage, where a *reason* is to be given for the construction of every word in a sentence ; and general principles are to be applied to particular cases, at every step.

The extension of the advantages of the College has been limited by another circumstance to which I have already adverted, namely, the absence of any general uniformity in the systems pursued in the District Schools throughout the Province, and at the College. Scarcely any two District Schools, I believe, at present, either use the same books, or pursue the same mode of instruction: the consequence is, that if, from any circumstance, a boy is moved from one School to another, his progress receives a serious check from the change to which he is subjected. The books which are put into his hand at the new School, are probably different from those he has been used to ; the method of teaching different ; so that even though the School to which he is removed should be in every respect superior to that which he has left, he cannot fail to labour under, at least temporary, disadvantages. Hence the pupil becomes disheartened, and his friends annoyed, because he does not occupy just the same position in the one School that he did in the other.

At a Seminary like the College, receiving Scholars from many other quarters, of course these inconveniences are exhibited under as many varieties as there are various modes of instruction at other Schools. And in addition to the practical embarrassment thus caused to the College, with the discouragement of the new pupils, and the disappointment of their friends ; it is not to be wondered at, if the feelings of the former Teachers are unfavorably affected at the idea of their pupils appearing to disadvantage (though perhaps without fault attributable to either place of education) at an Institution whose more public and prominent position naturally makes any thing like an indi-

cation of opinion more regarded, than in the case of comparatively private Schools.

All these inconveniences, which arise from the present relation, or rather want of relation, of the District Schools to each other and to the College, would be in a great measure removed by the adoption, under authority, of one uniform system of education at all those Seminaries which may be called public. This uniformity might, by marking out some fixed general outlines, and by enforcing the use of the same fundamental School Books, especially *Grammars*, be carried sufficiently far to obviate the disadvantages above referred to, without unnecessarily interfering with the exercise of each Master's judgment, and the practice of his own peculiar method of teaching, in details.

A well organized arrangement of this kind, by which the District Schools should, as far as they go, correspond with, and be introductory to, the College, as the College would be introductory to the University, could not fail of producing those essential and permanent advantages which ever attend systematic and uniform operations, above desultory and unconnected efforts; whilst the present state and circumstances of the Province, with respect to education, seem to render the execution of such a design as practicable, as it would be beneficial.

Upper Canada College,
May, 1836.

